◆DAFIS NEWS◆

From the Director's Office...

PAPERLESS PROCESS EXPEDITES REIMBURSEMENT TO TRAVELERS

...Susan Tollerson, OST/OFM

Are you STILL waiting for reimbursement for that trip you took the month before last? At last there's hope! On January 17, 1997, OST implemented an automated data interface between the Per DiemAzing Travel Management System and DAFIS. Per DiemAzing, a commercial off-the-shelf software application developed by Aldmyr Systems, Inc., automates travel authorizations and vouchers for temporary duty, blanket, and local travel. The interface produces DAFIS-ready accounting transactions which are transmitted directly to DAFIS, thus eliminating manual data input by the traveler's servicing finance office. OST can now pay its travelers by ACH within 3 or 4 working days from the date the voucher is approved. Compare that to 20 days or more for a manually processed voucher requiring a treasury check! OST, contracting with Aldmyr Systems, developed this interface with invaluable assistance from FTA's Financial Systems Division and MMAC staff.

Here's how it works. A file containing all new accounting transactions is uploaded daily from Per DiemAzing to a processing platform where it is "grabbed" by the servicing finance office and transmitted to DAFIS. These generic, Format 03 transactions are processed overnight by DAFIS and can be monitored the next business day in the Batch Control File Report (BCF-1). The actual printed documents (authorizations, vouchers, and receipts) are no

What's Inside

DAFIS Year 2000

...Joann Felix, Year 2000 Team, AMZ-200

The Office of Financial Management (OFM), Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center (MMAC), and DAFIS users are working together to get DAFIS ready to handle the year 2000. The December 1996 edition of DAFIS NEWS reported how we are approaching this project.

The Year 2000 Team is a team of professionals at MMAC that is making DAFIS programs year 2000 compliant. The team did an evaluation of all the DAFIS programs and identified the programs requiring modification in order to work properly for the change in century. This team is now concentrating on changing the appropriate programs in accordance with Year 2000 requirements. The work involves a considerable number of hours for analysis, programming and testing that will be transparent to the users.

What is the impact to our customers, the DAFIS users? OFM and MMAC are coordinating with users on (1) report programs, (2) interface programs that require Year 2000 changes, and (3) making sure customers will be using the new DAFIS Windows (NOVA) by September 30, 1999.

- ✓ **Report Programs:** MMAC and OFM working through the Financial Management Committee (FMC) are evaluating DAFIS report needs in an attempt to reduce current DAFIS costs. DAFIS maintenance to accommodate the change in century should not occur for any unnecessary reports. The team estimates that 237 of the 404 DAFIS reports will require adjustments to accommodate the year 2000. Each operating administration (OA) received a survey to evaluate and validate their report needs. MMAC will determine which DAFIS reports need to be modified for the year 2000 based upon the survey results. We extend our thanks to the DAFIS customers helping in this effort.

- ✓ **Interface Files:** MMAC is also working with the OAs on DAFIS interfaces. We sent customers a letter explaining DAFIS' approach to accommodate the year 2000 on interface files sent out from DAFIS. The list attached to this letter included interface files that the DAFIS Year 2000 Team has marked for modification. Also, MMAC will contact DAFIS users for information on the interface file changes that feed into DAFIS. We will coordinate with the users to schedule the test plan for all interface modifications.

- ✓ **DAFIS Windows (NOVA):** MMAC is converting all DAFIS online programs to the new DAFIS Windows. The conversion includes adjusting all online programs to be Year 2000 compliant. It is strongly encouraged that users be converted to NOVA before FY2000 begins on October 1, 1999. This date is important in order to move toward the OFM's TO BE VISION.

Questions concerning the Year 2000 project may be directed to Minhha Kasenurm, (405) 954-6111. ♦

NOVA
The Bridge to the Year 2000

...Philip Carlson, AMI-500A

NOVA, Natural Online Visual Architecture, is the next generation of DAFIS. It is designed to take us to the year 2000 and beyond. NOVA's architecture and design features benefit our users in many ways. NOVA uses standard Windows architecture for the client workstation, the file server and the gateway. The minimum workstation requirements are a 486/66 cpu (Pentium recommended) with 16MB of RAM, and Windows 3.1 or 3.11. Windows 95 support will be available soon.

NOVA is designed to fully utilize Windows functionality thus providing capabilities not currently available in DAFIS. NOVA has been made more "user friendly" than the current DAFIS online system through the use of windowing, selection boxes, and more easily understood error messages displayed in error boxes.

Windowing allows the user to have multiple screens open at the same time thus, if you are entering Format 03 data in NOVA and you find you have an appropriation code error you can leave your Format 03 screen open, go to the table screen, make your correction, and go back to the Format 03 screen and NOT HAVE TO REENTER YOUR DATA. As you know this is not the case with the current DAFIS online system. NOVA selection boxes allow the user to simply "click" on the correct entry instead of typing in the data. The new error messages are more meaningful and should help the user determine the problem and a resolution quicker.

A new feature in NOVA not available in the current DAFIS online system is ONLINE HELP. ONLINE HELP uses standard Windows help functionality. As in Windows, any help topic can be printed and the help topics will be updated more frequently than the current annual cycle. ONLINE HELP can also be accessed on the World Wide Web at the following site: http://www.amz.jccbi.gov. New Release information will also be included with the help feature. This topic will give you advance notice of changes to existing functionality or new functionality to be added.
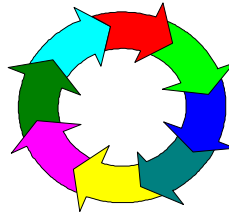
NOVA is designed to be more cost effective than the current DAFIS online system. Mainframe connect time charges and program processing charges are reduced since NOVA programs execute on the client workstation. NOVA's new design allows for easier maintenance, reduced development costs, and is year 2000 compatible. Other systems being developed such as VEM (Voucher Examination Module) and GEM (General Edit Module) share the same hardware architecture and software methodology as NOVA thus allowing full integration.

NOVA is positioned to take the DAFIS community of users into the 21st century. We are excited about NOVA; we think you will be too! ♦

longer forwarded to the finance office. Instead, vouchers processed using Per DiemAzing are subject to a "post-audit" statistical sampling review.   The traveler's approving official is responsible for providing, upon request, all relevant travel documents for that review.

Travelers in OST, TASC, and BTS are excited by this additional Per DiemAzing feature. Soon, travelers in FHWA, MARAD, RSPA, FRA, and FTA will also benefit, once Per DiemAzing is implemented.   Other administrations evaluating Per DiemAzing will

OKC TEAM DAFIS EMBRACES INTERNAL PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PART IV

...Steve Dugan, IPI, AMI-500

In past issues of the DAFIS NEWS this column has described the different phases of the Internal Process Improvement (IPI) process. Contained in those issues was a description of Maturity Levels, Key Process Areas (KPAs), and the requirements to become a Level 2 organization. In the last issue the topic was Requirements Management. In this issue we will describe **Project Planning** and its relationship to the DAFIS system.

A   quick   review....... IPI rates software organizations by five well-defined "Maturity Levels." Maturity Levels are divided into components known as Key Process Areas (KPAs). An organization must fulfill all of the KPA requirements before it can progress to the next higher level.
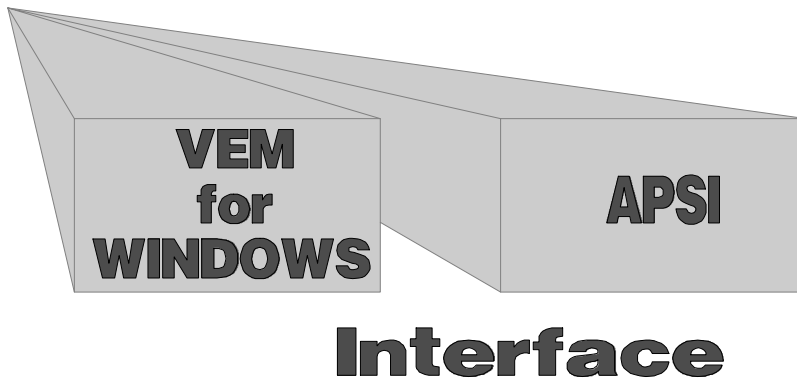
The six KPAs identified for a Level 2 organization are:

* Requirements Management
* Project Planning
* Project Tracking and Oversight
* Subcontract Management
* Quality Assurance
* Configuration Management

Project Planning

Project Planning is one of the most important KPAs within the process. A well designed and executed plan is always the best way to go in any project. If the plan is constructed correctly and followed throughout the project, the project will experience a much greater chance of success that will result in a lower cost, higher quality

VEM for WINDOWS / APSI Interface

...Rosemary Redmond, VEM Team, AMZ-200

The DAFIS Voucher Examination Module (VEM) Team has completed preparations for receiving transmissions from Automated Procurement System Initiative (APSI) or any procurement system that meets the standard VEM Interface format. The VEM Interface receives commitment/decommitment, obligations, accruals and invoices into VEM Windows. VEM Windows acts as a "front-end processor" that ensures transactions are fully edited and acceptable as input into DAFIS. VEM Windows along with Natural Online Visual Architecture (NOVA) was implemented in February 1997, and training followed the first week of March.
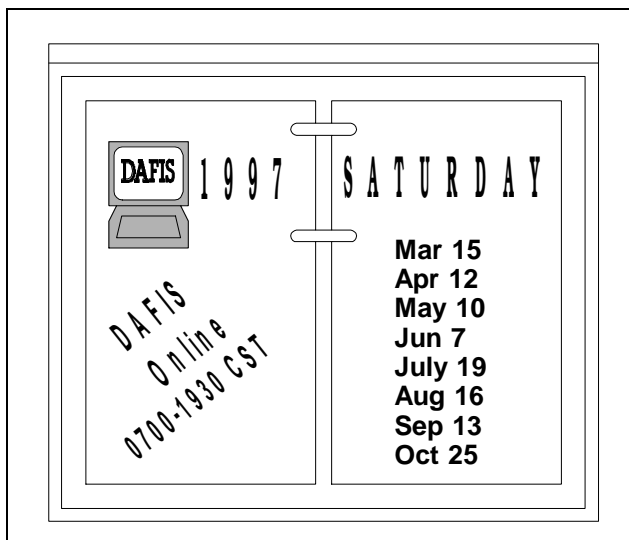
Some of the functionality in the current VEM (COBOL version) is not part of VEM Windows. These were addressed previously as VEM Windows "Phase II" enhancements but have not been approved for development. They include FTA Grants, G-Schedules* PO Types (Fast Pay, SF44, Advance payment), Pay Before Receipt, DAFIS Mass Change, Document Sequencing, Bar Code Scanning, Notification dataset and Imaging file.

The COBOL version of VEM will be taken out of production when NOVA/VEM Windows is fully implemented, but not later than fiscal year 2000. The features in the current VEM will not be available through VEM Windows when VEM is taken out of production. Agencies currently using VEM should be aware of these impending changes and include them in their plans as we approach year 2000.

* Although VEM Windows does not have G-Schedules there is a DAFIS ODF Change option. ♦

DAFIS 1997 SATURDAY

DAFIS Online 0700-1930 CST

Mar 15
Apr 12
May 10
Jun 7
July 19
Aug 16
Sep 13
Oct 25

DAFIS NEWS

Gerald Schoenauer Presented Partners-In-Progress Award

...Cheryl Cooley, AMI-500

Gerald Schoenauer, Federal Railroad Administration, RAD-40, was presented a Partners-In-Progress Award   for his partnership efforts in helping to prototype two Department of Transportation financial systems. Schoenauer and his team have worked very closely with the Oklahoma City DAFIS staff to beta test both the NOVA (Natural Online Visual Architecture) and MIR (Management Information Reporting) Systems.
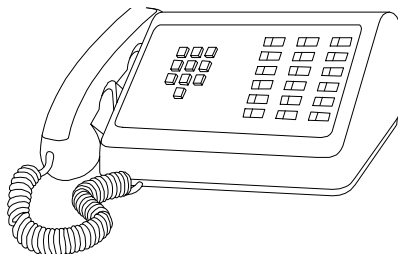

Gerald Schoenauer (center), Cheryl Cooley (center right), Jacque Estes (beside Cooley) and RAD-40 team.

The NOVA system changes the old character based DAFIS system to Windows architecture and will make data entry to DAFIS much easier for the customer. The MIR system is a data warehouse which allows the customer more timely access and great flexibility to manipulate their own report information in various formats. Schoenauer and his team have been extremely instrumental in helping the DAFIS team to work out bugs and improve the products from a customer viewpoint.

The award was presented by Cheryl Cooley, Manager, Departmental Accounting Systems (AMI-500), and Jacque Estes, Team Coordinator, Production Systems Support Team from the Oklahoma City DAFIS management team on November 16, 1996, at the Federal Railroads offices in Washington, D.C.

Schoenauer was praised for his abilities to consider the future, for understanding the value of risk-taking and managing change, and for his pursuit of excellence. In recognition of the combined efforts of the entire RAD-40 staff at the Federal Railroad Administration, Cooley stated, "Jerry, today we are recognizing the strength of your leadership and your support for the Oklahoma City DAFIS team. However, you and I both know as managers that nothing happens without the support and dedication of a truly great team."   ♦

DAFIS HELP DESK
(405) 954-3000

product.

Several years ago I was heavily involved with the sport of scuba diving. One of the basic principles that is commonly taught is "Plan your dive and dive your plan." The more complicated the dive is, the more important the rule becomes. I personally found this rule to be very true on a number of occasions. One very memorable occasion comes to mind when yours truly ran out of air at 135 feet in the Gulf of California (Not a fun thing to do). At least I learned my lesson about planning dives. Anyway back to the subject. We can equate this same principle to software project planning. A good slogan for Project Planning would read "Plan your project and follow your plan." The slogan is especially true for long term projects.

The purpose of Project Planning is to:

* Develop and document estimates of the work to be performed. The estimates are used in tracking and managing the project throughout its development.
* Define and document the steps that are necessary to complete the project.
* Establish commitments

The project planning begins with a "Statement of Work" which is created from information derived from the Requirements Management KPA.

The Statement of Work describes in detail:

* The work to be performed
* Technical goals and objectives for the project
* Identification of customers and end users
* Assigned project responsibilities
* The cost, schedule and resource constraints

The planning process includes:

* Assignment of a project software manager

* Estimation of the resources needed
* Estimation of effort, costs, and computer resources
* Negotiation of commitments with all affected groups and individuals.
* A review by senior management of all commitments made to all individuals and groups external to the organization
* Selection of the software
* Identification and assessment of the software risks.

Documentation created by the planning process includes:

* Identification of the output products
* Project schedule containing milestones and phase completion points
* Software risks
* Contingency plan to overcome risks
* Commitment Agreement from all affected groups and individuals.
* Estimation of the human resources effort, costs, and computer resources

In the next issue of the DAFIS newsletter we will continue to define additional KPAs.

It sure would be nice to dust off the scuba gear and visit the island of Cozumel (Old Mexico) for a week or two. Warm white sand, palm trees, clear water ....♦